

Message Text

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ACTION ORM-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 IO-13 ISO-00 DHA-02 VO-03 SCA-01

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R 250735Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4366

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF UNHCR MY

SUBJ: INDOCHINESE REFUGEES: BOAT CASES

REF: HONG KONG 9932 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY. WE FULLY ENDORSE HONG KONG RECOMMENDATIONS RE
ROUTINIZATION OF PROCEDURES AND LONG TERM PLANNING TO DEAL WITH
CONTINUING REFUGEE OUTFLOW BY BOAT FROM VIETNAM. WE ARE LESS
ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT FEASIBILITY AND RAMIFICATIONS OF
CENTRALIZED REFUGEE PROCESSING CENTER SOMEWHERE IN SEA REGION BUT
CONTINUE TO VIEW A MORE ACTIVE UNHCR PRESENCE IN REGION,
INCLUDING ADDITIONAL MANPOWER, AS A MATTER OF HIGH PRIORITY.

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IN THIS REGARD WE STILL ARE EXPERIENCING PROBLEMS IN

RECEIVING INFORMATION ON NEW ARRIVALS VIA UNHCR. MEANWHILE
FINAL PROCESSING IS UNDERWAY FOR 118 REFUGEES ALREADY
APPROVED HERE UNDER OUR PROGRAM. END SUMMARY.

2. WE FULLY ENDORSE HONG KONG'S SUGGESTION AND SHARE THE
SENSE OF URGENCY THAT PROCEDURES BE DEVISED TO DEAL WITH
CONTINUING AND PRESUMABLY LONG TERM PROBLEM OF VIETNAMESE
LEAVING HOMELAND BY BOAT. AS WE NOTED IN KL 4535 AND
PREVIOUS, WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT SERIOUS HUMANITARIAN PROBLEM
POSED BY DISPLACED PERSONS WHO ENGINEER ESCAPES AND CROSS
OPEN SEAS ONLY TO FIND THEMSELVES TREATED AS UNWANTED FLOTSAM
AND JETSAM. ESTABLISHMENT OF ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS FOR
ACCEPTANCE OF APPLICATIONS FOR REFUGEES UNDER THE P-7
(CONDITIONAL ENTRY) PROGRAM AND VISIT BY UN HIGH COMMISSIONER
FOR REFUGEES PRINCE SADRUDDIN AGA KHAN TO REGION ARE
EXCELLENT IDEAS. NOT ONLY DO OUR OWN REFUGEE PROCESSING
PROCEDURES NEED TO BE REGULARIZED, BUT AS WELL-COORDINATED AND
TRULY INTERNATIONAL EFFORT WITH THE UNHCR AS THE CATALYST AND
FOCAL POINT MUST BE GEARED UP TO ENCOURAGE (A) REGIONAL
COUNTRIES TO PROVIDE TEMPORARY ASYLUM AND (B) NATIONS OTHER
THAN U.S. TO ASSUME GREATER ROLE IN RESETTLEMENT PROCESS AS U.S.
PROGRAMS BECOME MORE RESTRICTIVE. THE IDEA OF DEVISING A
FUNDING FORMULA AND RATIO FOR ACCEPTING REFUGEES AS A GENERAL
GUIDELINE FOR U.S. PARTICIPATION ALSO APPEARS TO BE A RATIONAL
APPROACH TO INSURING SHARED RESPONSIBILITY IN A LONG TERM
INTERNATIONAL RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM.

3. WE ARE DUBIOUS HOWEVER ABOUT THE PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH
A UNHCR PROCESSING CENTER SOMEWHERE IN THE SEA REGION WHERE
BOAT CASE REFUGEES COULD BE CARED FOR AND PROCESSED PENDING
THEIR RESETTLEMENT. NOT ONLY WOULD IT PROBABLY BE DIFFICULT
TO LOCATE A COUNTRY WILLING TO HOST SUCH A CENTER, BUT
THERE ALSO IS THE DANGER THAT IF ESTABLISHED SUCH CENTERS
MIGHT EVOLVE INTO PERMANENT OR SEMI-PERMANENT REFUGEE
CAMPS A LA THE PALESTINIAN EXAMPLE, ALLOWING THE INTERNATIONAL
COMMUNITY TO ASSUAGE ITS CONSCIENCE THROUGH DOLES, CREATING
A HOST OF POLITICAL PROBLEMS, AND INSTITUTIONALIZING A BAD
SITUATION RATHER THAN REMEDYING IT. WHILE SUCH A CENTER
WOULD FACILITATE PROCESSING AND EAST LOGISTICS, OUR JUDGMENT
IS THAT A MORE ACTIVE UNHCR PRESENCE IN THE REGION, INCLUDINO
ASSIGNMENT OF ADDITIONAL RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVES AND STAFF,
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WOULD HAVE A BETTER PAYOFF TO RISK RATIO, AND SHOULD BE GIVEN
HIGH PRIORITY.

4. REGARDING CURRENT SITUATION HERE, ALTHOUGH UNHCR REGIONAL
REP SAMPATKSMAR HAS BEEN BACK IN TOWN FOR TWO WEEKS WE HAVE
NOT RPT NOT YET RECEIVED ANY INFORMATION FROM HIM REGARDING
95 REFUGEES THAT ARRIVED AT KUALA TRENGGANU JULY 25, DESPITE
OUR REPEATED INQUIRIES. SAMPATKUMAR CLAIMS PROBLEM IS THAT

HE HAS NOT RPT NOT RECEIVED ANY INFO FROM MALAYSIAN RED CRESCENT SOCIETY RE THIS GROUP. WE UNDERSTAND HOWEVER FROM A FORMER USAID OFFICIAL WHO VISITED THEM RECENTLY, THAT AT LEAST ONE FORMER USAID EMPLOYEE IS AMONG GROUP, WHICH NOW HAS BEEN MOVED TO KUALA KEMAMAN ON COAST ABOUT 80 MILES SOUTH OF KUALA TRENGGANU AND IS BEING WELL CARED FOR. MEANWHILE, ICEM TEAM CURRENTLY IS IN TOWN ASSISTING EMBASSY WITH PROCESSING OF REFUGEES ALREADY APPROVED UNDER U.S. EPP, WITH 73 REFUGEES SCHEDULED TO DEPART EN ROUTE TO THE U.S. ON AUGUST 29, AND ADDITIONAL 45 EXPECTED TO LEAVE SEPTEMBER 1, LEAVING A BALANCE OF 29 IN PENINSULAR MALAYSIA AND ONE IN BRUNEI FOR WHOM FINAL AUTHORIZATION NOT RPT NOT YET RECEIVED FROM WASHINGTON. OUR CURRENT THINKING IS TO SEND FINAL 29 OUT IN ONE GROUP ONCE TRAVEL AUTHORIZED FOR ALL. REFUGEE IN BRUNEI PRESUMABLY WILL HAVE TO BE MOVED TO HONG KONG FOR FINAL PROCESSING ONCE HE IS APPROVED SINCE IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT, IF NOT IMPOSSIBLE, TO ARRANGE FOR HIS ENTRY HERE.

5. ON SUBJECT OF INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE TO UNHCR RESETTLEMENT APPEAL, SAMPATKUMAR TOLD EMBOFF IN BRIEF CONVERSATION AUG 25 THAT WEST GERMAN EMBASSY HERE HAS RAISED POSSIBILITY OF ACCEPTING 20 OR SO VIETNAMESE REFUGEES FROM MALAYSIA. UNDERHILL

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